

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 14-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant AMENDS the specification and claims 14, 16, and 18, and ADDS claim 26.

Support for new claim 26 can be found in, for example, paragraph [0054] of Applicant's Substitute Specification filed on December 23, 2010 and Figs. 3A to 3G of Applicant's originally filed drawings.

The Examiner is reminded that in an Information Disclosure Statement filed on May 14, 2007, Applicant cited copending U.S. Patent Application Nos. 11/514,387; 11/514,386; 11/514,000; 11/513,609; 11/514,017; 11/513,537; 11/469,268; 11/469,310; 11/469,228; 11/469,252; 10/591,285; 10/591,560; and 10/591,559 to bring to the attention of the Examiner and have the Examiner consider the subject matter and claims of the copending U.S. Patent Application(s), the prior art references, Office Actions and responses to Office Actions made of record in the copending U.S. Patent Application(s). The Examiner is respectfully requested to update his/her review and consideration of the claims of the copending U.S. Patent Application(s), the prior art references, Office Actions and responses to Office Actions made of record in the copending U.S. Patent Application(s).

The specification was objected to for allegedly containing a minor informality. Applicant has amended the specification to correct the minor informality noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

Claims 14-22, 24, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bevins (U.S. 5,299,652) in view of Genise et al. (U.S. 5,517,876). Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bevins in view of Genise et al., and further in view of Goodman (U.S. 4,989,884).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 14-25.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite:

An actuation force transmission mechanism for a shift control device in a vehicle, the shift control device arranged to perform shift control in which a shift actuator is stroked by a predetermined amount to rotate a shift shaft, the

actuation force transmission mechanism comprising:

first and second coupling parts coupled together and arranged to provide a relative movement therebetween in a linear direction, the first coupling part arranged to be coupled to the shift actuator, and the second coupling part arranged to be coupled to the shift shaft;

first and second biasing mechanisms arranged to urge the first and second coupling parts toward a neutral position; and

a first stopper mechanism arranged to stop the relative movement between the first and second coupling parts when one of the first and second coupling parts is moved from the neutral position against an urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed; wherein

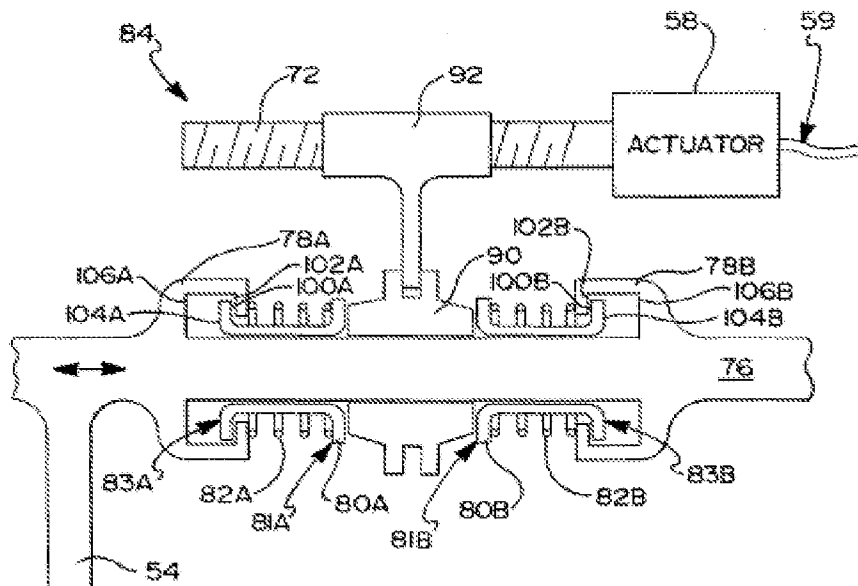
the actuation force transmission mechanism is arranged such that, when a resistive force acts linearly against the movement of the actuation force transmission mechanism, the first coupling part moves relative to the second coupling part against the urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed until the first coupling part is stopped by the first stopper mechanism, and in response to a continuing resistive force, the first and second coupling parts move together when the first coupling part is stopped by the first stopper mechanism. (emphasis added)

The Examiner alleged that Bevins teaches a vehicle including an actuation force transmission mechanism 12 including a coupling rod 35 that pushes against a lever 13. The Examiner acknowledged that the actuation force transmission mechanism of Bevins lacks a two piece coupling structure. The Examiner alleged that Genise et al. teaches an actuation force transmission mechanism including a first coupling part 90, a second coupling part 76, a biasing mechanism 82A, 82B, and a stopper mechanism 104A, 104B, 106A, 160B. The Examiner further alleged that it would have been obvious to modify Bevins to include the actuation force transmission mechanism disclosed by Genise et al. in order to smoothly shift gears.

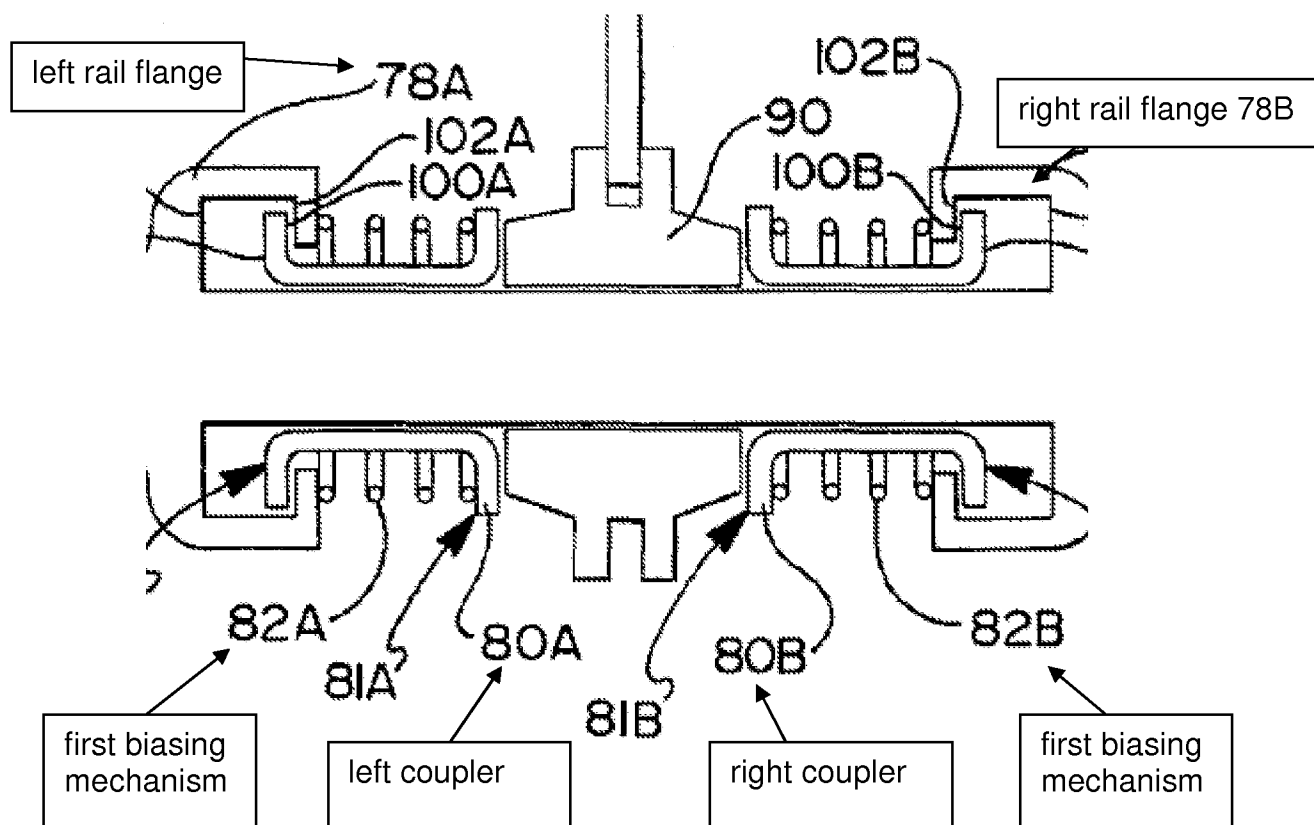
Applicant has amended claim 14 to recite the features of “a first stopper mechanism arranged to stop the relative movement between the first and second coupling parts when one of the first and second coupling parts is moved from the neutral position against an urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed” and “the

actuation force transmission mechanism is arranged such that, when a resistive force acts linearly against the movement of the actuation force transmission mechanism, the first coupling part moves relative to the second coupling part against the urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed until the first coupling part is stopped by the first stopper mechanism.” Support for these features is found in, for example, Figs. 3A to 3G and Figs. 5A and 5B of Applicant’s originally filed drawings which clearly show that as the first biasing mechanism 12A is compressed the second biasing mechanism 12B is decompressed, and as second biasing mechanism 12B is compressed the first biasing mechanism 12A is decompressed.

In contrast to Applicant’s claimed invention, Genise et al. teaches in column 8, line 50 through column 9, line 21 and shows in Fig. 6, reproduced below, that relative movement of the first coupling part 90 to the left in Fig. 6 of Genise et al. only compresses the first biasing mechanism 82A while the second biasing mechanism 82B is neither compressed nor decompressed. Likewise, relative movement of the first coupling part 90 to the right in Fig. 6 of Genise et al. only compresses the second biasing mechanism 82B while the first biasing mechanism 82A is neither compressed nor decompressed.



For example, as shown in the enlarged portion of Fig. 6 of Genise et al. below, it is readily apparent that as the first coupling part 90 moves the left coupler 80A to the left, the first biasing mechanism 82A is compressed between the first end 81A of the left coupler 80A and the left rail flange 78A. However, because the right coupler 80B is not fixedly attached to the first coupling part 90, and the coupler surface 100B of the right coupler 80B remains in contact with the surface 102B of the right rail flange 78B due to the constant bias of the second biasing mechanism 82B, the second biasing mechanism 82B is neither compressed nor decompressed as the first coupling part 90 is moved to the left.



Accordingly, only one of the first biasing mechanism 82A and the second biasing mechanism 82B of Genise et al. works (i.e., is compressed or decompressed) during movement of the first coupler part 90 to the left or to the right. Thus, each of the first

and second biasing mechanisms of Genise et al. must have a larger spring constant to perform the work of moving the second coupling part 76. Genise et al. does not remotely teach or suggest that both of the first and second biasing mechanisms should or could work during movement of the first coupling part 90 in one direction of movement of the first coupling part 90, and certainly fails to teach or suggest that both of the first and second biasing mechanisms should or could work until the first coupling part 90 is stopped by the first stopper mechanism, i.e., when coupler surface 104A contacts rail flange surface 106A.

Thus, the combination of Bevins and Genise et al. clearly fails to teach or suggest the features of “a first stopper mechanism arranged to stop the relative movement between the first and second coupling parts when one of the first and second coupling parts is moved from the neutral position against an urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed” and “the actuation force transmission mechanism is arranged such that, when a resistive force acts linearly against the movement of the actuation force transmission mechanism, the first coupling part moves relative to the second coupling part against the urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed until the first coupling part is stopped by the first stopper mechanism,” as recited in Applicant’s claim 14.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bevins in view of Genise et al.

The Examiner relied upon Goodman to allegedly cure the deficiencies of Bevins and Genise et al. However, Goodman clearly fails to teach or suggest the features of “a first stopper mechanism arranged to stop the relative movement between the first and second coupling parts when one of the first and second coupling parts is moved from the neutral position against an urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed” and “the actuation force transmission mechanism is arranged such that, when a resistive force

acts linearly against the movement of the actuation force transmission mechanism, the first coupling part moves relative to the second coupling part against the urging force of the first biasing mechanism being compressed and as the second biasing mechanism is decompressed until the first coupling part is stopped by the first stopper mechanism," as recited in Applicant's claim 14. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Goodman fails to cure the deficiencies of Bevins and Genise et al. described above.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Bevins, Genise et al., and Goodman, applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of elements recited in Applicant's claim 14.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable. Claims 15-26 depend upon claim 14, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claim 14 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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